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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this department. All communications must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer to ensure publication.

### TWELVE HOUR DUTY FOR SPECIAL NURSES

Dear Editor: There seems to be considerable discussion on the Pacific Coast, as well as all over the United States, no doubt, in regard to twelve-hour duty in hospitals for the special nurse. It seems to me in these times, when in all professions, as well as in all lines of work for women, the hours on duty are considered before taking up a profession or trade, that the graduate nurse should not be the only woman who is exempt. As a hospital manager, I have tried to weigh the subject, and can only come to one conclusion. Take the hospital's side: We admit a patient for a certain amount a week for room, board and nursing. Should the patient need more than general care, a graduate special nurse is called, for whom the patient pays five dollars a day and the maintenance of the nurse in the hospital. Should not the hospital, in fairness to the patient and nurse, give as much service as the patient would receive on general care? At least ninety per cent of patients who require special nursing could go on general care for twelve hours. This arrangement gives the pupil nurse experience which each institution, which conducts a training school, wishes to provide for the students. It also gives the special nurse time for unbroken rest. She can return to the patient better fitted to give the care needed than if she has been up from one to a dozen times during the night. It is a small per cent of patients who must have constant care and watching. The nurse who has worked steadily for twelve hours should have her rest away from the patient so that she may return and give the care that the physician and patient require. If a patient is delirious, or so critically ill that he needs a nurse every minute, two should be in attendance, as the nurse is a human being the same as any one else and should be looked upon as such. The trained nurse is in greater demand to-day than at any time in the history of nursing. More people go to hospitals than ever before, but unless some consideration is shown the graduate nurse, fewer women will enter the profession that should hold the attention of the higher type of women. It is up to the hospitals to do their part. It is not unreasonable, but only humane to the nurse and a fair deal to the patient.

California

LAURA L. MITCHELL, R. N.

### THE SYSTEM OF HOURLY NURSING

Dear Editor: In the *Journal* for the month of May, I read with great interest an article on "The System of Hourly Nursing." It seems to me that with publication this system of nursing could be worked out very satisfactorily to every one concerned. It would help to alleviate the great shortage of nurses, and also take care of the poorer classes, as by this system a patient could be cared for at the rate of about fourteen dollars a week. One nurse could care for five patients daily, receiving two dollars an hour, which would net her between fifty and seventy dollars a week. The nurse would have to create a demand for her services which would cause her to do her work to the best of her knowledge and ability. Therefore, by this arrangement, time would be saved, the shortage of nurses relieved, the cost to the patient lessened, the income of the nurse increased, and the really good nurses would be most in demand.

California

G. R.